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PARTY OF ONTARIO

It's Time

A five-point plan
for Ontario's
future

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Leader's Message

I invite you to forget our cynical political world for a moment and imagine a new kind of politics in Ontario: the kind where you come first.

It's possible. But it needs you to make it happen.

I joined the Green Party of Ontario to be part of a fresh new approach to politics that values good ideas over stale ideologies and has the courage to look beyond the four-year election cycle. My two daughters—and all our children—deserve a better future.

I sincerely believe it is possible to practise politics differently. By working together to strengthen our communities, we can create a legacy that will make us proud.

The role of government is to engage and empower individuals, businesses and organizations to develop sensible, long-term solutions to the challenges facing our communities and our province. We have an incredible wealth and diversity of talent in Ontario that we can rely on to find the best way forward.



It's time for a political party that unifies, not divides. It's time to bring people from all walks of life together to build a financially, socially and environmentally sustainable Ontario for ourselves, our children and future generations. We have a bold vision. With the help of thousands of Ontarians, we've created a five-point plan that reflects your practical values and sensible priorities:

- 1. Creating jobs for a twenty-first century economy**
- 2. Harnessing safe, affordable energy to power our communities**
- 3. Promoting access to quality, sustainable health care close to home**
- 4. Feeding our communities by championing local farms**
- 5. Delivering government that works for people**

With your help, our province can move in a positive direction. I invite you to join us. It's time for a better, more sustainable Ontario.



Mike Schreiner
Leader, Green Party of Ontario





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1. Creating jobs for a twenty-first century economy

Ontario has lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs in the past decade. We have become a have-not province with a record budget deficit. The global recession, a high Canadian dollar and rising world energy prices have hit our wallets particularly hard.

It's time to address these challenges head-on with policies that promote prosperity in a low-carbon global economy.

The Green Party has a plan to secure Ontario's future, not lock us in the past. We envision a future where Ontario builds on its diverse strengths to become a confident leader in the global economy. We will focus on creating sustainable, long-term jobs, and stop burdening our children with today's debts.

We can only achieve this future by unleashing and nurturing the creativity and innovation of our entrepreneurs and workers to build strong local economies. The Green Party is committed to responsible stewardship of our natural and financial resources and will promote policies that ensure we live within our means.

Your Green MPPs will:

1. Fight for good jobs and a fiscally responsible government

- a) Lower income taxes on families and local businesses to stimulate job creation
- b) Reward efficient use of resources and responsibly balance our finances with a revenue neutral tax on waste, pollution and carbon emissions
- c) Balance the budget by 2015, saving billions in debt and ensuring our tax dollars are spent on public services instead of interest payments

2. Support entrepreneurs, innovation and strong local economies

- a) Reduce red tape for small and medium-sized businesses so they continue to create jobs that support our communities
- b) Support research and development in jobs that will power our economy in the coming decades, including clean technology and knowledge-based services
- c) Improve high-speed internet access for all areas of Ontario

3. Develop youth employment opportunities by updating and strengthening our education system

- a) Freeze tuition for the 2012-13 school year while maintaining university and college budgets; index tuition increases to the rate of inflation from 2013-15
- b) Expand training and certification programs in job growth areas such as green buildings, biomedical technology, renewable energy and sustainable transportation
- c) Increase investments in apprenticeship, co-operative and mentorship programs



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2. Harnessing safe, affordable energy to power our communities

Rising energy prices are affecting individuals, families and businesses across Ontario. Mismanagement and a lack of planning have left us scrambling with an energy system that doesn't meet our needs.

It's time for a new approach. Ontario has important choices to make – right now – that will affect our sources of energy for generations. We can repeat past mistakes by locking ourselves into big, inflexible, expensive new nuclear plants—even while we are still paying the decades-old debt from the last round on every electricity bill. Or we can embrace a new energy era that invests in the future.

The only way to generate long-term, sustainable savings on our energy bills is to eliminate waste and prioritize efficiency and conservation. Transitioning to flexible, decentralized and community-based energy production makes sense. We need to focus on local ownership, local decision-making and local benefits to stimulate job creation in communities across the province.

We also need a strategy to tackle rising transportation costs caused by traffic congestion and high fuel prices. Smart planning and strategic investments in efficient transportation systems can reduce gridlock, save us time and money, and reduce fuel consumption and pollution. The Green Party's energy plan is focused on sensible solutions that will reduce our province's carbon footprint, make our economy more efficient and save us money today, tomorrow and years from now.

Your Green MPPs will:

1. Prioritize energy efficiency and conservation to reduce Ontario's energy consumption

- a) Save you money and create jobs by reinstating and expanding the home energy savings program as part of a comprehensive Green Building Program
- b) Capture waste heat from chimneys in large buildings and turn it into electrical energy by increasing generation targets for combined heat and power
- c) Remove barriers so entrepreneurs can save us money with innovative technologies in conservation, efficiency and a new smart grid

2. Pursue a secure and financially responsible energy supply

- a) Require local participation in energy projects; support micro-generation and community-based renewables that generate local benefits
- b) Negotiate agreements to purchase inexpensive hydroelectricity from neighbouring provinces and increase hydro generation in Ontario
- c) Protect our pocketbooks by opposing construction of new nuclear plants and prohibiting cost overruns for nuclear projects from being passed to rate-payers and tax-payers

3. Implement a sustainable transportation plan to reduce gridlock and lessen the impact of rising fuel prices

- a) Promote efficient, liveable communities where streets and roads are safe for all users
- b) Reduce commuting costs by supporting transit and affordable commuter benefits including incentives for ride-sharing, more high-occupancy vehicle lanes, and tax credits for public transit users
- c) Increase incentives for low-emission, fuel-efficient and electric vehicles



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3. Promoting access to quality, sustainable health care close to home

Health care spending makes up half of the provincial budget. If the current trend continues, 80% of Ontario's budget will go to pay for health care by 2030. We need to improve the value for money spent to sustain our publicly-funded health care system.

Ontario is squandering precious health care dollars by mismanaging important initiatives such as eHealth. Too many dollars are spent on administration instead of front-line services and staff.

The Green Party of Ontario will make better and more efficient use of health care dollars. We will invest in more family health clinics staffed by a variety of providers. We will ensure home care services are available for those who need them.

We will focus on preventing illness in the first place, by creating healthier communities, promoting healthier lifestyles and ensuring a healthy environment. The rising rates of asthma and respiratory illness, for example, place an unreasonable burden on our well being, our families and our health care system.

Together, we can provide all Ontarians with access to quality care when and where they need it.

Your Green MPPs will:

1. Make health promotion and illness prevention a top priority

- a) Support the development of healthy, liveable, recreation-friendly communities
- b) Ensure clean air, water and food by reducing pollution, improving water quality and sewage treatment, and by paying landowners for producing healthy environmental goods and services
- c) Provide incentives for people to pursue healthy lifestyles and support school-based nutrition, outdoor education and athletic programs

2. Reform health care delivery to ensure all Ontarians have access to quality community health services

- a) Re-prioritize funding to support doctors, nurse practitioners and other health professionals for family/community care clinics that are integrated with public health
- b) Put communities back in charge of local health care decisions
- c) Finally deliver on electronic health records by using best practises from other places

3. Honour our seniors by improving the care available to Ontario's aging population

- a) Ensure that seniors receive the continuum of care they need where they want it by improving home care, transitional care, assisted living and long-term care
- b) Create case managers at the family clinic level to proactively coordinate the care seniors need
- c) Support all long-term care facilities to provide services in compliance with provincial standards



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4. Feeding our communities by championing stronger local farms

Our communities benefit from thriving farms that provide fresh and healthy local food. The food sector is the second largest employer in Ontario, and profitable farms and agricultural businesses are the backbone of a prosperous rural economy and essential to feeding Ontario.

Our food system is experiencing significant challenges. Farm incomes are variable and negative for most sectors, food bank use is at an all-time high, and poor diets are contributing to rising health care costs. The number of farmers is declining, the age of farmers is rising and fewer youth are growing food. Ontario only has 7,000 farmers under the age of 35. We are losing too much farm land to urban sprawl. It's time to make strengthening our food system a priority so that Ontario can feed itself and others.

Food connects us all. Green MPPs will advocate for a comprehensive Ontario Food and Farming Strategy that provides access to healthy food from Ontario's farms. This begins with ensuring that our farmers and food processors have a stable, reliable income. It's time to make healthy local food a priority.

Your Green MPPs will:

1. Provide access to healthy food for Ontarians

- a) Coordinate a comprehensive healthy school food program
- b) Invest in community food programs that promote access to healthy food, community gardens, cooking and nutrition classes; provide tax credits for farmers and processors who donate to food security organizations
- c) Set measurable Ontario food purchasing targets for all public institutions

2. Promote programs to support financially sustainable local food systems

- a) Establish an Ontario Food and Farming Policy Council to coordinate planning across ministries and consult diverse stakeholders on programs, regulations and legislation
- b) Reward farmers for stewardship practices that provide environmental and community benefits such as clean water, habitat preservation and carbon storage
- c) Invest in rural infrastructure, research and innovation, plant-based manufacturing products, distribution hubs, farmer co-ops, organic and specialty crops to support farm incomes

3. Remove barriers to success for family farms and local food processors

- a) End one-size-fits-all regulations for family farms and local food processors; implement smart regulations that recognize differences in the size of operations
- b) Eliminate tax penalties and reduce zoning restrictions to facilitate local, on-farm food enterprises and innovative sources of farm income
- c) Improve income stabilization programs so they are more accessible for family farms, cover a wider range of products and don't penalize farmers who experience bad years



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5. Delivering government that works for people

We need a new approach to government, one where you and your community—not political insiders—come first. The old parties don't understand that we are educated, connected with each other and highly capable of making good decisions for our communities.

It's time for a new political culture in Ontario. Electing Green MPPs will bring a breath of fresh air to Queen's Park by rejecting hyper-partisanship and short-term thinking focused on getting votes. Ontario needs a government that is willing to plan for the future just like individuals, families and businesses do.

Greens reject the false choice between ripping government apart or making everything big, bureaucratic, and expensive. The Green Party believes in a government that engages and empowers individuals, businesses and organizations to develop sensible, long-term solutions for our communities.

Your Green MPPs will:

1. Ensure open, transparent and accountable government

- a) End backroom deals and no-bid contracts
- b) Open government consulting contracts up to scrutiny by posting details of all public contracts online
- c) Streamline freedom of information requests

2. Remove barriers that prevent citizens from being heard

- a) Implement a community engagement process and restore local decision making for energy projects
- b) Ensure that residents have a say in community health care decisions
- c) Give citizens a greater say in public consultations, including strengthening the Environmental Bill of Rights, reforming the Ontario Municipal Board and ending lawsuits that prevent citizen participation in planning decisions

3. Ensure public officials are held to the highest standards

- a) Strengthen conflict of interest rules for provincial and municipal officials
- b) Disclose public officials' expenses in a timely way
- c) Eliminate corporate and union donations to political parties



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The Green Party is committed to a financially, socially and environmentally sustainable budget. We believe that responsible stewardship of our natural and financial resources requires us to live within our means.

The Green Party would balance the provincial budget by 2015 – two years earlier than the current plan – so that more of our hard earned tax dollars are spent on essential public services, not interest payments. Our plan is designed to balance the budget without raising taxes or cutting services.

We believe a balanced approach to responsible fiscal planning is to: budget for growth in health care spending; hold other program spending at 2010-2011 levels; and delay additional across the board tax cuts for large corporations until after the budget is balanced in 2015, redirecting them to targeted individual and small business tax credits as well as investments in students and food programs.

As illustrated, the Green Plan will eliminate the deficit two years earlier than the status quo, avoiding \$29.4 billion in debt, and saving \$2,265 for every person in Ontario.

Budget comparison

Status Quo 2017 Deficit Elimination Plan	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
All totals in \$Millions						
Revenue	111,800	117,000	122,800	129,000	135,400	142,200
Program Spending	114,600	116,700	118,800	121,000	122,900	124,900
Health	49,200	50,600	52,000	53,500	55,105	56,758
All Other Spending	65,400	66,100	66,800	67,500	67,795	68,142
Interest on Debt	11,400	12,600	13,700	14,800	15,700	16,300
Reserve	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Deficit	-15,200	-13,300	-10,700	-7,800	-4,200	0
Accumulated Deficit	179,100	192,400	203,100	210,900	215,100	215,100

Green Party 2015 Deficit Elimination Plan	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
All totals in \$Millions						
Revenue	112,496	117,472	123,233	129,573	134,855	141,697
Program Spending	111,977	112,970	114,038	115,051	118,754	124,282
Health	48,552	49,523	50,514	51,524	52,554	56,758
All Other Spending	63,425	63,447	63,524	63,527	66,200	67,524
Interest on Debt	11,286	12,211	12,938	13,522	13,895	14,153
Reserve	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Deficit	-11,767	-8,709	-4,743	0	1,206	2,262
Accumulated Deficit	175,667	184,376	189,119	189,119	187,913	185,651

For detailed notes the Green Party budget plan visit www.gpo.ca/platform

Take Action!

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